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Historical Documentation and Its Approach in Al-Andulus

5th Century to 7th Century of Hijra

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Abstract

Researchers of History paid attention to the study of historical documentation and its approach for such study is useful for specialists in this field. A lot of theses, dissertations, books and papers in the past decades and the first decade of this century have been written dealing with the compilations of Islamic historians and their approach.

The present thesis is entitled " Historical Documentation and Its Approach in Al-Andulus 5th Century to 7th Century of Hijra" and is classified into five chapters.

Chapter one deals with the documentations of the people of Andulus in the field of History according to the style of biographies which is one of the old and important approaches done by Islamic historians. It shows the development of the historical documentation and its trends and effects due to the changing circumstances of Al-Andulus. The chapter includes seven sections. In each section, there are three major points, which deal with the documentation of men biography, jurists and judges biography, literary writers and poets biographies, the documentation of princes, caliphs, women biographies, and the documentation of writers and doctors biographies. The last section deals with another kind of biography which is the documentation of sheikhs index (Known as Al-Baramij).

Chapter two deals with the documentation of events in al-Andulus (5th century to 7th century). It includes two sections. Each one includes three major points dedicated to the documentation of Al-Magazi and Al-Seyar and the documentation of ancestry and news. We have mentioned at the end of each chapter what the sources mentioned as informational or historian therefore it did not mention his books.

Chapter three deals with the approach of Ibn Hazm (died in 456 h.) in the documentation of biographies. We have chosen four letters in biography as models of study. We have studied his approach in each letter and his approach in the organization of each letter and the nature of biographies. Ibn-Hazm wrote in the first letter about the readers of Egypt. He mentioned them in a scientific approach caring to the time and place choen for his biographers. The space of his biographers in each letter was not equal, which was natural. Each writer has his approach in choosing the kind, bases and space of biographies, which lie behind certain reasons known for specialists.

Ibn-Hazm dedicated his letter for the famous readers of various places and mentioned the name and death year. His criterion of fame was clear. In the second letter, he mentioned the narrators of Hadith, mentioning the great

names of narrators only. He dedicated the third letter to Fatwa sheikhs in various places. The fourth letter deals with the biographies of Al-Rahedeen, Amoyeen and Abbaside Caliphs, ending with Al-Muqtader. He followed a specific approach. The biography includes major pillars which mention the nickname, the name, year of ascending the throne, date of death and name of Caliph's mother.

Chapter four deals wit the study of the approach of 'Pioneers of Maliqa' for Ibn-Asaker (died in 636), which is completed by his nephew Ibn-Khamis (died in 639). This book deals with two kinds of biographies: the jurists and literary men of Maliqa. We presented the contents of the book, then we studied the approach of biography of the writer, which is the name, ancestry, nickname, living place ans sometimes death year and their poetry. The chapter presents the approach of the book sources and the written books. Finally, it includes the political, administrative and cultural contents of the book 'Pioneers of Maliqa'.

Chapter five deals with the book of 'Al-Awasim from Al-Qwasim' for the judge Abi Bakir Ibn Al-Arabi (died in 543). It talks about his general outline and his approach in organization. He divided his book into two parts. The first deals with the dogmatic and thoughtful crises faced the nation through the statements and opinions of philosophers and various schools of thought. It includes too the solutions and answers for these problems.

The second part of the book deals with the historical crises of the nation, especially the death of the prophet Mohammad (peace and blessing upon him), which was a great crisis in the Islamic history. Then the writer talked about the reaction to this crisis which is ended with the selection of Abu Bakir who ended this crisis.

We studied the approach of Abu Bakir in systemizing his book, his contents and his sources. He was the first to deal with this approach in dealing with the thoughtful problems and dangerous historical events in the history of the nation when he made his book 'crises and prevention'. He expressed his personal opinion in these issues, which is an opinion of an Andulusian historian concerning the crises of the nation. He showed his ability and direction in this approach, which he saw as useful to solve these crises. Therefore, he dedicated his book to deal with this issue. The study ends with a conclusion and recommendations.

The study concludes that there are certain reasons for the abundance of historical documentation in the decades of the fifth century of Hijra. Among these reasons are the development of Moslems life and the intellectual movement in Al-Andulus. The centralized political rule in Al-Andulus and the establishment of the rule of states helped to prepare the

suitable milieu for development and prosperity. The scientific progress is ended in Al-Andulus with the end of the centralized political power. Scientists, literary men and poets deserted Qurtaba city, the Capital of great Andulus because of the lack of security due to the great disturbance. Those writers deserted Qurtaba in 399 H. to the cities, which lie far of the tension. They found the encouragement and status with the princes of these cities. The princes of these states, during the years of disturbance and after the end of the Amoayan Caliphate in Al-Andulus in 422 to attract the scientists, gifted men and craftsmen and make them so close because some of the princes were poets or scientists brought up in a civilized society appreciating knowledge and science. We are not certain that the books mentioned in the two chapters by the Islamic historians are the only two documentations but they reflect part of the development of historical documentation in Al-Andulus till the end of seventh century.

It is clear that the documentation continued in the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries more than the fourth century, which was politically and culturally stable though the political fragmentation led to the appearance of many small states known as the states of Al-Tawaaif in a time of political and military retreat of Al-Andulus in the ages of Al-Tawaaif, Al-Murabeteen and Al-Muhadeen.

It is clear too through chapters three, four and five that the Andulusian historians are different in their approaches in organizing their books, so it was difficult to compare their approaches for their books are different in their contents too.